

Who was Walter J. Paton?

Walter J. Paton was a math teacher at Shrewsbury High School (currently Beal School) for 11 years before joining the army during World War II. He was married and had three young children when he left to serve overseas. He was a member of the 58th Armored Field Artillery Battalion. Walter's first stop was Africa. Then he went to the invasion of Sicily. He was on the beach at D-Day, and fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

Walter was killed in 1945, at the age of 40, when the vehicle he was riding in, on a reconnaissance mission, hit a land mine in Prum, Germany. At that time, his rank was Lieutenant Colonel. He was awarded a Silver star and two purple hearts.

Because he was a hero and a teacher in Shrewsbury, this school was named after him when it was built in 1950. We celebrated what would have been Lt. Colonel Paton's one-hundredth birthday on June 4th, 2004.

Lt. Colonel Paton was a veteran. Veterans and their families make sacrifices to serve their country. There have been veterans since colonial times to those presently serving in the armed forces around the world today. We celebrate veterans on Memorial and Veterans' Days to honor them. We continue our veterans' community service learning project each year in honor of all who have served to keep our country free.